

Schools' Collection material from Co. Clare now available on www.duchas.ie

Folklore and local history from Co. Clare is now available on www.duchas.ie.

The Schools' Collection, an important component of the National Folklore Collection, UCD, contains the folklore material recorded by pupils between 1937 and 1939. It consists of over half a million pages recorded by around 50,000 primary school pupils in the 26 counties.

Material from the Schools' Collection has been published on an ongoing basis on duchas.ie since the end of 2013 and all volumes from the Collection, covering all 26 counties, will be available by the end of 2016. Folklore material from Dublin, Mayo, Donegal, Waterford, Galway, Leitrim, Kildare, Kerry, Sligo, Limerick, Monaghan, Laois, Kilkenny, Louth and Tipperary has already been made available on the site since the end of 2013. duchas.ie is the result of a partnership, beginning in 2012, between the National Folklore Collection (UCD), Fiontar (DCU) and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The site will be of interest to a great many Irish people and to the Irish diaspora. For specialist researchers in the fields of folkloristics, local history, archaeology, genealogy, linguistics, and a range of other disciplines, duchas.ie offers considerable research potential. The site can currently be searched by place or by person, and a search facility according to topic will be made available this year.

Almost 170 schools in Co. Clare took part in the scheme and 49 volumes of material were compiled.

The Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs, Joe McHugh, TD, said, 'This is yet another important step in this innovative project as material relating to traditional life in Ireland in years past will be made available to the general public. This new material will enable researchers and many others to contrast life as it is today and life as it was over 80 years ago.'

The duchas.ie project is developed by Fiontar, the Irish-medium teaching and research unit in DCU, and the National Folklore Collection in UCD, one of the largest folklore collections in the world. The project is jointly financed by UCD and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with support from the National Lottery.

The Digital Repository of Ireland acts in an advisory role in the work of duchas.ie relating to standards and interoperability in digital archiving.

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*An Roinn
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**Department of
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Notes for the editor:**Stories from County Clare**

Biddy Early has been a topic of debate and fascination in County Clare for the last 200 years. She is mentioned in stories collected in County Galway and also in County Tipperary as well as in stories collected in her native Clare.

There are many differing accounts of Biddy's life. This [story](#) tells us that Biddy was married three times and that she acquired her powers from a magic bottle that fairies gave to her son after he defeated them in a game of hurling. The bottle, it is said, enabled her to cure any disease or ailment. This [story](#) offers a different explanation and tells us that her son stole the magic bottle from the fairies. Biddy's reputation has suffered in Clare. She was despised by the public up until 1995 when Clare won their first All-Ireland Hurling title since 1914. Many Clare people blamed Biddy for the Clare hurling team's misfortune citing a curse that she had apparently placed on the team.

The Story of the [Colleen Bawn](#) is very famous in Clare. It is a tragic story that concerns a young girl who falls in love with William Scanlan ('William' is given as a name in certain stories, however, John Scanlon was the man's actual name). The Colleen Bawn's family were well off but William Scanlan was in debt. According to this story, Scanlan decided to get rid of the Colleen Bawn. He invited her to go on a boating trip with him and he drowned her somewhere between Tarbert in County Kerry and Kilrush in County Clare. Daniel O'Connell defended him but he was found guilty and hanged. Many different versions of this story are to be found in the Clare collection. Take a look at the results of the search '[colleen bawn](#)' and '[cailín bán](#)'.

Irish was still spoken in West Clare until the 1970s and there were a number of Irish-language stories and accounts collected in Carrigaholt, Kilbaha and in other areas around Loop Head. The majority of this [manuscript](#) is in Irish; stories collected around the Carrigaholt area in Loop Head. A story about Fionn Mac Cumhaill is the very first story that greets you with many more treasures contained within the manuscript. Read this [lament](#) ('Brón na Farraige - Caoineadh ó Chill Bheathach') about the melancholy of the sea. The sea is often the subject of folklore in West Clare as one would expect from a county whose environment is heavily influenced by the Atlantic Ocean.

Click [here](#) to delve into the history and traditions of Clare and learn more about the county through both Irish and English. Go explore County Clare and learn lots more!